(SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL): (a) to (c) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

**Reduction in Government Stakes in PSU Banks**

1284. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that in a recent meeting with representatives of PHDCCI, the Union Banking Secretary is reported to have stated that the Nationalised Banks and Banking Regulation Acts would be soon be amended to bring down the Government's stake in public sector banks;

(b) if so, the name of the banks likely to be covered initially;

(c) whether the voluntary retirement schemes (VRS) have also been formulated; and

(d) whether the recognised unions of the banking employees have been consulted in the matter and if so, with what results?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL): (a) and (b) In view of increasing requirement of capital of nationalised banks in order to attain the prescribed higher standards of capital adequacy, the infeasibility of the Central Government continuing to indefinitely meet the requirement of additional capital of the banks in the context of competing claims for budgetary support from the physical and social infrastructure sectors and social services and the need for raising capital from the market, the need for promoting competition, efficiency and providing more autonomy and in accordance with the policy of progressive economic reforms, it has been recommended by the Committee on Banking Sector Reforms (Narasimham Committee-II) to amend the Banking Companies (Acquisition and Transfer of Undertakings) Act, 1970/1980 to provide for an enabling provision for the banks to raise capital from the market even with Government shareholding going below 51 percent. In the said meeting, the above facts and the legal position only were explained and no announcement of any decision was made.

(c) and (d) Regulation 29 of the Bank (Employees) Pension Regulations, 1995 provides for grant of pensionary benefits to those

who voluntarily retire from banks' service on or after 1st November, 1993 after completing 20 years of service. While Government has not framed a new Voluntary Retirement Scheme, views of the chief executives of public sector banks have been sought on the desirability of introducing a Voluntary Retirement Scheme, similar to the one in operation in public sector undertakings, with or without modifications.

**Projects Taken up by North-Eastern Development Finance Corporation**

1285. SHRI W. ANGOU SINGH: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the projects taken up by the North Eastern Development Finance Corporation with the amounts sanctioned for each project;

(b) whether the projects are concentrated to a State or to all the States of North-Eastern Region; and

(c) the details of the projects sanctioned for each State alongwith the amount sanctioned therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL): (a) North Eastern Development Finance Corporation (NEDFC) has reported that as on date, 71 projects have been sanctioned by it involving an amount of Rs. 63.73 crores.